

REMARKS

A final Office Action was issued in the present application on November 10, 2009. In light of the above amendments and remarks herein, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the application and all presently pending claims. By the present Amendment, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 16, 31 and 32 as discussed below, along with dependent claim 20. No new matter has been added. A request for continued examination is being submitted with this response.

Response to 35 U.S.C. § 101 rejections

With regard to the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 101, Applicant has amended claim 16 as suggested by the examiner and submits that sufficient structural language has been provided to meet the requirements for patentable subject matter under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Support for the claim language can be found in the drawings and claims as originally filed, as well as page 3, lines 19-22 and page 6, lines 20-22 of the application as originally filed.

Response to 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejections

In the Office Action dated November 10, 2009, the Examiner has rejected claims all of the pending claims under 35 USC § 102(e) based on U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0093346 to Weber (hereinafter “Weber”).

On pages 5 and 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner again references paragraphs 24 and 41 of Weber against the claimed element of providing application-related information to a pre-determined member of a second user type, wherein the second user

type is pre-determined via said management component based on the primary application-related information. On pages 13-14 of the Office Action, the Examiner addresses Applicant's previous arguments regarding the deficiencies in Weber as to this claim language, by stating that the language "the said second user type member is pre-determined" is a broad limitation and "could simply be a person making a decision in their mind as to which official they'd like to send their application to, corresponding to their application-type.."

Applicant reiterates its previous arguments of record regarding the deficiencies Applicant perceives in the rejection of the pending claims.

Applicant further submits that the additional amendments to claims 1, 16, 31 and 32 further distinguish the present invention from the cited art. Support for these amendments can be found, for example, on pages 9 through 11 of the original application as filed.

Specifically with regard to the independent claims, Applicant has claimed a management component as one element of the invention, with the management component including programming for allowing a second user type to establish, *prior to receiving primary application-related information*, at least one member of a second user type for evaluating application-related information for a defined category of first user types. Applicant submits that such language, which is supported, for example, by pages 9-11 of the original specification, accommodates the aspect of the present invention

whereby, for example, a first member is assigned all applications for ninth grade, a second member is assigned all applications for another grade, etc.

Applicant submits that there is nothing in Weber that discloses the invention as presently claimed. The previously cited portions of Weber pertain to financial aid processing, including verifying that all required information is present and assuring that established criteria are met. However, verification and evaluation are not the same as pre-establishing assignments for office and evaluation personnel. The examiner's broad interpretation of "pre-determined" must be constrained by the examination of the actual claim language. The examiner's hypothetical person "making a decision in their mind as to which official they'd like to send their application to" cannot correlate to the management component (not the applicant), establishing *prior to receiving the application-related information*, at least one member of a second user type for evaluating application-related information for a defined category of first user types.

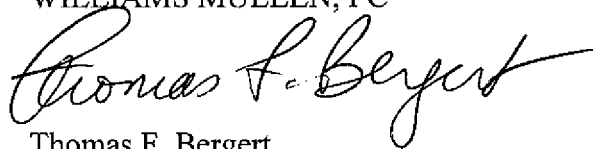
The prior art must show *all* claim elements in order to find anticipation or obviousness, and *all* words in a claim must be considered in judging the patentability of that claim against the prior art (see *Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP)* §§ 706.02(j) and 2143.03). Weber does not show the elements claimed and specified above. Applicant thus submits that all of these claims are allowable, and that the remaining dependent claims are also allowable based upon being dependent from an allowable independent claim.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that the present application is in position for prompt adjudication and allowance. Applicant believes that all of the claims currently pending in the present application are now in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the address and phone number provided below.

A petition for 3-month extension of time is accompanying this response, along with a request for continued examination. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0766 in payment of the required fees, but with the exception of the issue fee.

Respectfully submitted,
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Attached: Petition for 3-month extension of time
Request for continued examination

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